

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2019

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 5251

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINS, LE, JO, SY

SUBJ: JORDANIAN VIEWS ON SITUATION IN LEBANON

REF: AMMAN 2490

1. WE HAVE MADE AMMAN AN ADDRESSEE ON ALL OF OUR REPORTS ON LOCAL SITUATION TO AMMAN WITH EXCEPTION ONE TELEGRAM RE SYRIAN ASPECT OF PROBLEM WHICH BEING REPEATED SEPARATELY. WE VERY MUCH AWARE RELEVANCE OF SITUATION HERE TO JORDAN AND WILL CONTINUE REPEAT SUBSTANTIVE MESSAGES AMMAN. WE DO NOT BELIEVE SITUATION PRESENTLY AS DANGEROUS AS ZAYD RAFAI MAKES IT OUT ALTHOUGH, AS WE HAVE OBSERVED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, PROLONGATION OF FIGHTING WHICH INCREASES LIKELIHOOD IT WILL SPREAD AND SYRIAN INTERVENTION ARE TWO ELEMENTS WE (AND GOL) FEAR MOST.

2. THUS FAR EGYPT HAS APPEARED TO BE RATHER POSITIVE IN SUPPORT OF FRANGIE AND IN EFFORTS RESTRAIN SYRIANS. HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE COULD NOT CHANGE OR THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE PLAYING DOUBLE GAME ALTHOUGH WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF SUCH TO DATE.

3. AS WE HAVE REPORTED THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT COLLABORATION BETWEEN SOME OF LEBANESE LEFTIST GROUPS AND FEDAYEEN WITH LIKELY SUPPORT OF AT LEAST POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA
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NATURE BY USSR VIA LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND SUPPLY OF SOV ARMS VIA SYRIA. OTHER LEFTISTS GROUPS ARE KAMAL JUMBLATT'S PSP, THE PPS, AND SYRIAN AND IRAQI BAATH. THEIR NUMBERS ARE NOT GREAT, HOWEVER, AND GREATEST DANGER

SEEMS COME FROM PDFLP, PFLP/ GC AND SOME EXTREMIST ELEMENTS OF PFLP AND FATAH. AS REPORTED THEY CLEARLY DO NOT WISH AGREEMENT BETWEEN FEDAYEEN AND GOL AND HAVE ALREADY BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN SABOTAGING SEVERAL CEASE- FIRES.

4. WE SHARE GOJ' S CONCERN OVER SYRIAN ROLE BUT ARE A BIT SURPRISED THAT GOJ CONSIDERS IT CAN DO NOTHING. THIS ALL MORE TRUE SINCE AMMAN HAS LONG BEEN ARGUING THAT GOL SHOULD TAKE SORT OF ACTION IT HAS FINALLY BEEN FORCED TO TAKE. AS REPORTED REFTTEL, GOJ DOES HAVE " NUMEROUS AND HEAVY TROOP UNITS" ALONG NORTHERN BORDER. PRESENCE THESE TROOPS HAS IN PAST APPEARED WEIGH SIGNIFICANTLY IN SARG CAL- CULATIONS. WE WONDER WHETHER GOJ COULD NOT PASS DISCREET WORD TO SARG THAT IT CONSIDERS ITS OWN INTERESTS BEING JEOPARDIZED BY WHAT IT HAS LEARNED OF SYRIAN ASSISTANCE TO HEATING UP SITUATION IN LEBANON, THAT CONTINUATION SUCH ACTIONS BY SARG COULD CAUSE ISRAELI INTERVENTION WHICH WOULD THREATEN JORDAN AS WELL AS SYRIA, AND THAT GOJ THINKS SYRIANS WOULD BE WISE TO PULL IN HORNS. LEBANESE FOREIGN MINISTER JUST INFORMED CHARGE THAT EGYPTIAN ENVOY KHOLI HAS LEFT THIS MORNING MAY 9 FOR DAMASCUS IN EFFORT RESTRAIN SYRIANS. JORDAN DEMARCHE WE SUGGEST WOULD THUS COMPLEMENT AND SUPPORT EGYPTIAN EFFORTS. WERE THIS TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY OSTENTATIOUS (YET PURELY FOR SHOW) REINFORCE- MENTS OR MOVEMENTS OF JORDANIAN TROOP UNITS IN NORTH IT MIGHT HAVE SOME DETERRENT EFFECT ON SARG.

5. WE QUITE AGREE THAT PUBLIC SUPPORT OF GOL BY THE JORDANIANS COULD BE HARMFUL AND LYING LOW FOR TIME BEING GOOD POSTURE.
HOUGHTON

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